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The Story of the  
Violets and the Rose  
And Other Poems

By  
J. Packard Laird



The Knickerbocker Press  
New York  
1909



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## THE STORY OF THE VIOLETS AND THE ROSE.

FAR, far away, beyond the shining clouds  
That close the curtains of the night behind  
The tired sun, when his day's work is done,  
There lies a lovely land where fairies dwell,  
And dance by moonlight on the shining  
green,

Their gauzy wings with stardust sparkling  
bright,

Wearing for jewels, dewdrops, moonbeam-  
kissed,

And dresses made of fairest fairy flow'rs.

2      **Story of the Violets and the Rose**

A land all glorious, with palaces,  
And kings and queens with wondrous  
    jewell'd crowns;  
And mighty, valiant armored knights, who  
    dwell  
In lonely, rocky castles, and who fight  
In bloody battles for the cause of right,  
And each the champion of his lady fair.

And in this land, beside a silver stream,  
Which, rippling o'er the crystal pebbles,  
    sang  
A song of tender sweetness, there were born  
Some lovely violets, which day and night  
Their perfume rare shed to the wand'ring  
    breeze.

Alone they lived and watched the waters  
    dance  
Over the crystal pebbles through the dell;

They listened to the songs of sweet-voiced  
birds

By day, and when the evening softly fell,  
They slumbered to the music of the stream.

And one bright night, while mortals were  
asleep,

The King of Fairies summoned all his court  
Unto a fancy ball, which he had planned  
Out in a velvet grassy meadow, near  
Where dwelt the modest violets by th'  
stream.

The dance was gay, and all in merry  
mood,

And moonbeams, lighting on their lustrous  
wings,

And sparkling on the jewels, made a scene  
More wondrous bright than one could even  
dream;



4      Story of the Violets and the Rose

And many a fairy prince that night did  
win

A fairy princess for his fairy bride.

But there was one,—and passing fair was  
she,—

Who sat apart alone, and sadly watched  
For the belated coming of her prince,  
For he was sure to seek her out, she thought,  
And come from far to dance with her that  
night.

She waited long, but still he did not come,  
And then, at last, her heart became so  
sad

She spread her wings, and, sighing, sailed  
away

To find some peaceful spot and seek repose.  
She floated lightly through th' shadowy  
woods,

O'er glistening meadows and the silver  
stream,

And lighted on th' bosom of a flower,—

The fairest of the modest violets.

And while she rested there, the breezes  
swayed

The flower to and fro, and soon sweet sleep,

With soothing hand, her weary eyelids  
closed.

The dance was o'er long since, and when  
the day,

Far in the Eastern sky began to dawn,

E'er she awoke, she faintly seemed to hear

A vague sweet song,—the singing of the  
stream;

And in her nostrils such a rare perfume,—

The fragrance of the modest violets.

6      **Story of the Violets and the Rose**

And when she ope'd her eyes, her heart  
was glad,

And smiling on the violet, she said:

“O gentle, lovely Violet, pray ask  
What most you wish, and I will give it you.”  
Th' violet spake: “My sisters here and I  
Have often heard about the beauty rare  
Of that most lovely Queen of Flow'rs, the  
Rose,

And could we have our greatest hope fulfilled,

We then could die without a vain regret.

Our wish, O gracious Fairy, is to see

This fair and lovely Queen of Flow'rs, the  
Rose.”

The fairy spread her wings and sailed away,  
But with the midnight softly came again  
And gathered all the violets and bore



Them, sweetly sleeping, tenderly away.

And when the morning broke and they  
awaked

Their hope had been fulfilled, for they did  
rest

Upon the bosom of a maiden fair,—

The fairest of the flow'rs, their Queen, the  
Rose.

## OPERA ETERNA.

SOMETIME, when mortal eyes no longer see,  
And minds unhampered are by sordid  
clay,  
Our spirits shall behold Infinity,  
And measure out the fulness of its day.

Sometime, when mortal ears no longer  
hear,  
And harsh, discordant sounds forever  
cease,  
Into our souls shall ring both strong and  
clear  
The wondrous harmony of perfect peace.

The great Composer gives to each his  
part

Upon his special instrument to play,  
And bids him practise it with glowing  
heart,  
And make it perfect ere th' Immortal  
Day.

Whether it be the blatant clarion loud,  
Or tender, trembling tone of violin,  
Or clanging cymbal of the noisy crowd,  
Or whispered wailings of the flute  
within,—

Each has its place amid the mighty throng  
The great Musician has assembled there,  
And each must play his piece or sing his  
song,

And he whose notes shall ring untrue,  
beware!

Kind words, kind deeds, strong, noble  
thoughts and all

That man both needs and gives of  
sympathy;

Or heroes' blood, who in fierce battles fall,  
That weaker hearts may win the victory,

And every note the world has ever known, —  
Of rapturous joys or languorous, longing  
sighs,

Of unshed tears each heart has called its  
own,

Of prayers unspoken, breath'd to un-  
seen skies,

Of hopes resplendent, lifting up the soul  
Unto the everlasting, shining hills,

Of all the sweetest thoughts our hearts  
control,

Of all the glory that our vision fills,—

Yes, every tone of every phase of life  
Shall ring within that harmony sub-  
lime,

And notes of victory from every strife  
Shall echo from the mystic halls of Time.

And ever swelling through th' unending  
years,—

The soul's discordant bonds forever  
riv'n,—

With grand accomp'niment of trembling  
spheres,

Earth's music ring,—The Symphony of  
Heaven.



## FANCIES.

DID you ever lie on the grass and look  
Far into the summer sky,  
And wonder about each quaint little cloud  
That silently wanders by;  
And maybe design in its mystic shape  
A face that is treasured dear,—  
A spirit that hovers about th' earth,  
To watch and to guard you here?

And far down a vista of tender blue,  
Through a gate of cloudy gold,  
You fancy a glittering castle rise,  
With its turrets broad and bold;

Around it a beautiful, smiling world,—  
The flowers so wondrous fair,  
The birds with their matchless melodies,  
And—somebody else, who 's there.

Did you ever hear when the day was done  
The songs that the angels sing,  
To the tune of their silv'ry moonbeam  
harps,  
Each trembling star for a string;  
And dream that the world with its cares  
and wrongs  
Had vanished from mortal sight,  
And Heaven had silently nestled down  
On th' bosom of peaceful night?

Perhaps you may hear in that melody  
The voices you 've loved before  
Which echo back over the sea of dreams,  
From th' sands of a golden shore,

And the masterful chords sound through  
the world

Of your soul life, far and wide,  
And sink away through the infinite,  
O'er th' crest of the crystal tide.

## MIDDAY AND MIDNIGHT.

A SMILING, virile world, a haze o'er all,  
The songs of birds, the flowers bright  
and gay,  
The hum of work, the children's merry call,  
The stately vessels on the rippling bay,  
Life and ambition in the throbbing pulse,  
Shadow and sunshine on the busy way.

A peace serene and full, the birds asleep,  
The breath of flow'rs, the mystic moon-  
light rare,  
The op'ning heart and soul, dear dream-  
land deep  
Inviting wand'ers to her pastures fair,  
The angels, with their trembling, starry  
lamps,  
Guarding the slumbers of My Lady, there

## SHE IS CIRCE.

THE air is sweet in Circe's bower,  
And fragrant every tender flower,  
And golden every fleeting hour,  
But she is Circe.

The fairest maiden in the land,  
With every charm at her command,  
With magic voice and magic wand,  
But she is Circe.

Beware that fond, alluring dream,  
Beware that blue eye's soulful beam,  
Things are not always what they seem,  
And she is Circe.



## OLD TIMES.

OLD Times,—what are they? Memories  
which linger

In the deep recesses of our hearts, and grow  
Every year more dear, more purely beautiful.

Wine, which is from the oldest casket taken,  
Sparkles more brightly, has a richer flavor  
Than what is new. So it is with our  
mem'ries,

Time purges out that which we would not  
cherish,

Brightens more and sanctifies the ones we  
love.

And, when the shadows gather fast about  
us,  
Stretching long across our ways in mystic  
shapes,  
Hiding from our sight, perchance, our  
guiding star,—  
Then from Heaven's portals shines the  
welcome ray  
Of Memory's golden sunlight, and we lift  
Up our straining eyes unto the hills afar,  
And see those scenes which e'en time can  
never dim,  
And which each fleeting year binds closer  
to us.  
Then from the sweet revery we rise and  
say,  
From our full hearts: "God bless Old Times  
and Memory."

## WILD ROSES.

You were beautiful, wild roses,  
And your fragrance very rare,  
And your grace the most enchanting,  
And your blushes passing fair.  
But your beauty is far deeper,  
And your blushes born anew,  
And your fragrance doubly sweeter  
Since My Lady smiled on you.

## APPORTIONMENT.

God doth apportion unto every man

The qualities that suit him best, that he  
By full development of what he hath  
The fulness of his glorious God may see.

He gives us Grace that we may have the  
right

Unto the great redemption He doth give  
To those who seek it, who, though fallen far,  
May drink the blood from His great  
heart and live.

He gives us Hope, that through the trials  
sore

Which crowd so thick around our path-  
 way here,  
 We may not be discouraged in the fight,  
 But struggle on to gain the goal so dear.

He gives us Love, that we with glowing  
 heart  
 May joy in every mission, small or great,  
 Which bringeth happiness to other souls,  
 And maketh every duty consecrate.

He gives us Faith, that, though we may  
 not now  
 Behold or know what His great purpose  
 is,  
 We may rely upon His holy word,  
 In peace, because we know that we are  
 His.



And now, O God, Who giveth unto us  
Faith, Hope and Love and Thine  
abundant Grace,  
Grant unto us therein to live and grow,  
And in our lives reflect Thy glorious face.

## A TOAST.

I PLEDGE this cup of sparkling wine  
    To one who's cherished dear,  
Whose smiles, like Summer's glad sunshine,  
    Bring sweet contentment here.

No dream too fair for her, I trow;  
    No crown of jewels rare  
Could add adornment to her brow,  
    Or glory to her hair.

And never shone the stars so bright  
    In balmy, southern skies,  
But pale they 'd be before the light  
    Of beauty in her eyes.

So lovely, and so fair of face,  
    So fondly true is she.  
Her form reflects the angels' grace,  
    Her soul, their purity.

## A WISH.

I wish, my little Sweetheart, you could  
know  
How much, to me, the love I bear you  
means;  
How from this sordid world my heart it  
weans,  
And lifts the clouds that gather dark and  
low.

How, when the world is one discordant  
mass,  
Clashing away the harmony from life,

Making the heart a battle-ground of strife;  
When sweetest flow'rs lie withered on the  
grass;

How, when the spirit reaches out and  
yearns

For comfort, which, alas, cannot be found,  
When storms arise, and tempests surge  
around,

And in the mind a restless fire burns;

How then, when all is wrong, your spirit  
seems

More sweet than all of heaven beside could  
be,

Bringing a restful calm on life's rough sea,  
Wafting my mind away in pleasant dreams.

How soon it brings sweet joy from deepest  
woe,

Making the world more bright than e'er  
before,

Guiding my bark toward the brighter  
shore.—

All this, Sweetheart, I wish that you could  
know.



## MYSTIC.

LITTLE stars that nightly wander  
Through the quiet skies,  
Tell me what of life and beauty  
Far beyond you lies.

Tell me of that wondrous country,  
Far, O far away,  
Into which the great sun marches  
At the close of day.

Can you see the gates of Heaven,  
And the angels fair,  
Hear the echo of their music  
From your home up there?

Little brooks that dance, coquetting  
    With the gay sunbeams,  
Tell me, are you not the spirits  
    From the land of dreams?

Do you drink the golden sunshine,  
    With the summer rain,  
And with merry music laugh it  
    To the world again?

Tell me, shall our souls forever  
    Onward flow, like you,  
Through the lights and through the  
    shadows,  
To the boundless blue?

## MY LADY'S BOWER.

WILD roses, blooming rich and fair,  
    Bedeck My Lady's bow'r,  
Could I with her their fragrance share,  
    For e'en one little hour,  
And with them, too, but rest within  
    The sunshine of her smile,  
'T were better far than had I been  
    In Heaven that little while.

## OUTSIDE THE WORLD.

OUTSIDE the World,—'T is sweet betimes  
To spread our Fancy's golden wings  
And soar away through richer climes,  
To where the Fount of Beauty springs.  
To leave this little world which fills  
Our daily life with care and joy,  
And drink the breath of those far hills  
Where happiness has no alloy.

And as we near each distant star,  
That links us with the far above,  
We joy to recognize they are  
The smiles of spirits that we love.  
The spirits of each fond ideal,  
Of Faith, whose banners high unfurled,  
Still leads us on. All hopes are real  
In that fair land, Outside the World.

## PATER, NOSTER.

O THOU great Spirit, whose divine decree  
Created light and bid the darkness flee,  
O shed Thy light around that I may see  
Thy joys sublime.

O THOU sweet Spirit, whence spring harmonies  
That day and night fill all the earth and  
skies,  
O grant that in my soul the song may rise  
Of Thy dear love.

O THOU strong Spirit, whose right hand  
doth guide  
The stormy winds and raging waters wide,

O lead me through life's storms close to  
Thy side,  
And keep me there.

O Thou most kingly Spirit, who hast shed  
Thy loving mercy on a world sin-dead,  
Let Thy forgiving hand rest on my head  
And give me Peace.

## ANIMA MEA.

SWEETHEART, through long, long years  
I 've dreamed of you,  
And oft, in silent, happy twilight hours,  
Through Fancy's shad'wy grove I seemed  
to see

You wandering, so queenly and so fair.  
The waning glimmer from the closing West  
Shone through your hair,—a halo round  
your head;

The violets in your bosom and the flowers  
That, growing wild, were blessed to touch  
your feet,

Blended their perfume with the fragrance  
of

Your presence, as a breath from Fairyland.



And once it seemed, Sweetheart, you came  
to me,

From out that shad'wy grove and put  
your hand

Upon my forehead, and your starry eyes  
Looked into mine and read my very soul.  
I could not move or speak, and yet I longed  
To clasp you to me and to tell you all  
The pent-up words my tongue so oft had  
framed.

I deemed words too profane and poor to  
break

This holy silence and this blessed spell,  
But yet I wished that you could know  
how much

Your spirit had controlled my every mood,  
And made me see the tapestry of Life  
As one grand picture, which yourself had  
wrought:

How in the quiet hours the thoughts of you  
Sparkled like gems, set in the quiet gold;  
How, in the struggles and the battles fierce,  
You were the star which led to victory.

And as you gazed upon me, lo a light  
Of infinite tenderness glowed within  
Your eyes, and then I knew you under-  
stood

The secrets that I fain would have you  
know.

I put my arms around you and you came,  
At last, a captive to my mighty love.

Then, as the vision faded from my sight,  
We two were walking through that shad'wy  
grove,

The glimm'ring halo shining round us both,  
And all the flowers were blooming still  
more bright,

And all the birds, from out the quiet  
boughs,  
Burst into singing, and their song was  
Love.

And is this dream, Sweetheart, to always be  
Only a dream? May I not hope some day  
To tell my story unto list'ning ears,  
And lead you into that same shad'wy  
grove,  
And let you see the flowers blooming there,  
And listen to the music of the birds?

## A LULLABY.

SLUMBER, my darling, angels beside thee  
Ever shall guard thee, whate'er betide thee,  
Into the land of sweet dreams they'll  
guide thee,

Slumber, my darling, gently sleep.

May dreams of happiness and visions  
blest

Fill with full delight and true joy thy  
breast,

While angel lullabies lull thee to rest,

Slumber, my darling, gently sleep.

## THE VIOLET.

O, DEAR, tender Violet,  
So fragrant blooming here,  
The world would little fancy  
You e'er had shed a tear.

But in the quiet hours,  
Beneath the starlit skies,  
On Night's soft robes have fallen  
The dew tears from your eyes.

And yet without the yearnings  
And longings of your heart,  
You could not, to the saddened,  
Your perfume rich impart.

Bloom on, lovely Violet,  
In my heart's garden there,  
And let my spirit blossom  
Like you, so fragrant, fair.

## DREAMLAND.

THERE 's a little dell in Dreamland  
Where I often like to stroll  
By the happy, laughing waters  
And the pleasant, grassy knoll.

Where the flow'rs are ever blooming,  
And the birds are singing sweet,  
And the petals of the roses  
Make a carpet for my feet.

There the fairies come to frolic  
In the quiet of the night,  
And they scatter lovely jewels  
Like the dewdrops sparkling bright.



So I sit and watch the picture  
 Till I see a winsome face  
 A-smiling through the roses,  
 And a form of fairy grace

All swaying with the lilies white  
 And the roses tall and fair,  
 While the misty sunset's making  
 Amber glory in her hair,

As she wanders through the mazes  
 Of the fancy, fairy flow'rs,  
 And they drink her fragrant beauty,  
 'Mid their blossom-laden bow'rs;

And then away she passes  
 Through the mists of Dreamland far,  
 Up the silver path that leadeth  
 To the mystic evening star.

Then I pick the rarest flowers,  
And I nurture them with care,  
That my soul may drink their beauty  
And itself become more fair;

For I hope to reach that country  
Where in beauty she doth sleep,  
With the fairy music round her,  
While the stars their vigils keep,

And to steal upon her softly  
In the quiet of the grove  
And to wake her with the fragrance  
Of the flowers she doth love.

## PRO FUTURO.

O COULD the tears,—the sweet, sad tears  
that flow  
In silent, sacred hours, when twilight  
falls,—  
But water flow'rs that bloom in later  
years,  
How fragrant would they be.

O could the happy smiles from faces dear,  
That lent their warmth to gladsome, sunny  
days,  
But shine through misty years on newborn  
flow'rs,  
How fair those flow'rs would blow.

O could the struggles brave, ambitions high,  
And victories that gallant hearts have won,  
Ring in our ears amid life's battles here,  
How noble might we be!

## AU REVOIR.

GOOD-BYE little fond Fairy Dream,  
You have merrily led me along  
By the edge of the gay sparkling stream,  
To the tune of full many a song,

Through days that were gloomy and dark  
You have shown me the faint gleam of  
light,  
You have pointed my eyes to the spark  
That still glowed through the blackness  
of night.

But now, by the side of the stream,  
You have spread out your fair wings to  
fly,  
I shall miss you, my fond Fairy Dream,  
Good-bye little Dream, good-bye, good-  
bye!

## VENETIAN LOVE SONG.

SILENT stars are watching o'er,  
Moonbeams gleam across the sea,  
While the waves that kiss the shore,  
Softly sing to you and me.  
Softly, love, to us they 're singing  
Of the peaceful joy of love,  
And their melody is ringing  
To the evening star above.

Softer than the violets' blue  
Is the lovelight in your eyes,  
And your cheeks a fairer hue  
Than the summer sunset skies.  
Love, while you are sweetly sleeping,  
With the waves I 'll sing to thee,  
With the stars my watch be keeping  
As they softly shine on thee.

## BENEDICTUS.

DEAR God, as tender flowers blow,  
And to the world their fragrance throw,  
So bid my soul to bloom and grow  
For Thy dear name.

When heavy clouds o'erspread the sky,  
When fierce, wild winds rage loud and high,  
O grant that to my trusting eye  
Thy Peace may shine.

For all the griefs my heart have riven;  
For all the joys Thy love has given;  
For hopes of happiness and Heaven,  
Dear God, Thy Grace.



## FRIENDS.

THERE are ties that firm have bound us  
Through a little span of years;  
There are mem'ries which surround us  
That Time to our hearts endears.

As the summer breezes blowing,  
Where the flow'r its fragrance spends,  
So may Love, his gifts bestowing,  
Bless abundantly our friends.

## IN MEMORIAM

HOWEVER deep your slumbers are  
    Beneath the wooded hill;  
Wherever, in that land afar,  
    You rest by waters still,

The echoes of sweet songs we sing  
    Are wafted to you there,  
And spirit thoughts, on golden wing,  
    Our hearts' best riches bear.

And your dear sympathy still gives  
    Its tender, fond caress,  
And glowing in our souls it lives  
    To love and cheer and bless.

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